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Dr. UPTON's

Funeral

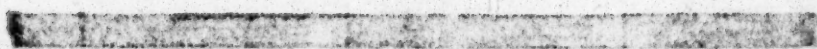
SERMON.



Dr. UPTON'S

THE

SERMON



726 A
Funeral Sermon,

Upon the Sudden

And much Lamented Death of

Dr. Francis Upton;

Who Died September 4th, 1711.

Preached at *Black-Fryars.*

By *Samuel Wright.* *N*

*The Memorie of the Just is Blessed ;
but the Name of the Wicked shall Rot,
Prov. X. vii.*

*The Righteous shall be in Everlasting
Remembrance, Psal. CXII. vi.*

The Fourth Edition.

L O N D O N :

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Funeral Sermon

Upon the sudden

And much lamented Death of

Dr. Francis Opton;

Who Died September 4th, 1711.

Preached at Black-Tyburn.

By Samuel Viner.

The Manuscript of this Sermon is in the
possession of the University of Oxford.The Right Hon. the Lord Bishop of
Oxford, &c.

To Mrs. Upton Widow, and to
the Rest of the Family and
Relatives of the Deceas'd.

AT your Request the following Sermon is
Printed: And as you have many
Friends, yea Families that are Suf-
ferers, and Mourners together with you, who
will be desirous to Read it; so I promise my self
that your Approbation will very much Recommend
it to others.

MY Great Design hath been to do Service
to the Living, whilst I have been paying this
last piece of Respect to the Dead: And however
I succeed as to others, it is some Satisfaction to
Think that I have not been wholly disappointed
in my Attempts to be Serviceable to You.

AS you were pleas'd to Call me In to bear
a Part in your Affliction, and to Assist you in
the sustaining of it; so would I now Gather up
a few of those Hints that have been Useful on
this Occasion; believing These will be much more
Acceptable to you, than to fill a Dedication with
Useless Complements.

YOU have a great deal to Quiet and Com-
fort you under the present Calamity. You have
no reason to Question the Happiness of the Soul
that is Departed; and it was a Consolation that
our Blessed Saviour left with his Disciples at his
leaving the World, If ye loved Me ye would

Rejoyce because I go to the Father. And then again, you your selves have observed the Wisdom and Goodness of Providence, both as to the Time and the Manner of his Departure. He has Liv'd to see Things so far settled, His Affairs, and his Children so dispos'd of, and his House so set in Order, as must very much Allay your Sorrows. Add to this that it is the Will of God it should be thus with you; and He is certainly to be Rever'd in all his Dispensations; and He is able to make up the Widest Breach. But, further, you have promised to Forsake all for Christ, when called to it, in your Covenant Transactions with him; you have sealed and agreed to be his Followers, even upon Those Terms, Math. x. 37. He that Loveth Father or Mother, &c. That is, the nearest Relations, yea even his own Life more than me, is not worthy of me. And once more you know that the Time is short, and therefore this should Moderate our Grievs as well as our Joys. It is but a little while, and Both will be at an End.

BUT you will give me leave to put you in mind that you have something more to do, than meerly to Bear this Affliction, it is your Duty to Improve it also. To lose such a Relation, and after that to lose the Benefit and Good that might be gain'd by this Exercise, would be a Double Loss; yea in the End the latter will prove a Much Greater, and more Grievous Loss than the former: The One you are Not Accountable for, the other you Are: The one is your Affliction,

Affliction, the other would be your Sin : God forbid that your Sorrow should be thus Aggravated and Encreas'd.

LET This therefore, be a Time of Watching and Conquering your own Spirits, that they may neither too soon throw off, nor too much Sink under, the Tryal; not to Despise and make light of such Rebukes on the one hand, nor to Faint under 'em on the other, is the Happiness and the Duty of a Christian. Let this be a Time of Retiring from the World, and Commanding with your own Hearts, so as that You may become truly Acquainted with your selves, and with the State and Condition of your Souls. I have heard it from you as a Saying of him that's Gone, We never so well know our selves as by Afflictions. Let your Sins, Now, be called to your Remembrance, and your Repentance Renewed while your Hearts are Tender, and humbled within you. Blessed are they that thus Mourn, for they shall be Comforted, Math. v. Let your Resolutions, now more than Ever be Fixed for God, and Heaven: Let those Affections which were set on your Dear Deceased Relative, now Go Up with him to that Place where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. We should not only follow the Bodies of our Dead to the Grave, but follow their Souls to Glory; our Hearts should still Accompany them there, and we should long to be with them in that Blessed State where there are no Imperfections, where there will be no more Separations. In the mean time you should
Give

Give up your selves, and all your Affairs into the Hands of God; submit to his Conduct; trust in his Goodness and Mercy; walk in his ways; be sure not to forsake Him, and you may Rejoyce in the Application of that Promise, Heb. xiii. 5. I will never leave thee, nor forsake Thee.

I know it is your Desire thus to do, and I shall not cease to Pray for that Grace that may Enable you.

I heartily wish you the Comfortable Enjoyment of your Remaining Blessings; and if it Please God, the Increase of them. I thanfully acknowledge Your and the Doctor's great Kindness to Me, and Mine; and since I am not Capable of making any Returns to Him, It shall be my Study, and Pleasure to do all I can as a Testimony of my Gratitude to You. May the Presence of God Accompany you in your Removes; may this still put you in mind of your Condition in This World, which is so aptly in Scripture Compared to that of Pilgrims, and Sojourners. And may all these things have so Good an Effect, as that the Joys of your Future Meeting a Deceased Husband, Father, or Brother, may abundantly Recompense the Pain and Agonies of your Late Parting. I am,

Your very much Obligated

and truly Sympathizing

Friend and Servant,

S. WRIGHT.

Bury-Court,
Sept. 24th, 1711.

Funeral Sermon.

James IV. xiv. *latter part.*

For what is your Life? it is even a Vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

TO Understand the Design of these words, we need not look any farther backwards than the preceeding Verse: In which we find the *Apostle* Correcting the folly of those who Lay their Projects and Contrivances for Worldly Gain and Prosperity, so as to leave the thoughts of God's Providence, and their own Mortality, out of their Schemes; as if they had both Life, and all its Advantages at their Command. The intent therefore of this Passage is, to Check the Man of Business and the World in his too eager and peremptory Determinations for the pursuit of present Things, by teaching him to submit All to the *Will of God*, who does alone dispose of our Times, and our Mercies.

Thus much also we are Taught both by the *Life* and the *Death* of our *Departed Friend*, as we shall see in the sequel of this Discourse. A Life so Busie, and so much under the Conduct of Religion; together with a Death so sudden and surprizing, cannot, one would think, fail of making very deep and useful Impressions. And how exactly our *Text* is suited to this *Melancholly Ocasion*, will appear, if you Reflect on this one Circumstance; that He, who to all appearance was in Health at the close of one Day, lay numbred amongst the Dead in the Morning of another. Well may we say with the *Apostle*, *Ye know not what shall be on the Morrow: For what is your Life? it is even a vapour, &c.*

Every sudden Death we hear of, methinks speaks no less to us than this, that at the *present moment*, for any thing we know, we may be as *near dying*, as if our Friends and all about us had *given us over* for Dead; and therefore that it is not unfit to suppose our selves in such a Condition, while we are Meditating on this Subject. Thus let us set our selves seriously to Consider,

I. The Description and Representation that is here given us of the present Life.

B

II. Those

II. Those things which may reconcile us to such an Account :
And

III. The Improvement which we ought to make of it.

1. Let us seriously Consider this *Description of the Present Life, It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

I shall not seek after any thing that might Surprize in this Metaphor, but only Enlarge a little on these Three plain and very obvious Things.

1. Our *Life* is said to be a *Vapour*, on the account of its *shortness* : it appears but for a little time. As an Exhalation that rises out of the Ground, or the Waters, may wander a while upon the Surface of the Earth or Seas, 'till having spent it self, it disappears, and is seen no more ; so Life, which some have called an *active Spark struck out at the meeting of Soul and Body*, seems very sprightly and busie 'till the Vital Flame is spent, and then it Languishes and is Extinct. And if it should reach the longest Term of its appointed Duration, yet may it very well be said to be but a *little time* ; as in that known place in the XC Psalm. *The days of our years are threescore years and ten ; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow : for it is soon cut off, and we flee away.* How does the Scripture every where abound with affecting Representations of this Truth ! Sometimes Life is reduc'd to one of the least and scantiest measures, *Thou hast made my days as an Hands-breadth* : And in other Places, the shortness of Time is set forth by the swift motion of it. *My days*, says Job, *are swifter than a Weavers Skuttle* ; which is no sooner thrown in at one side of the Web, but it is out at the other. If we look to the Sea, our *days* are said to *pass away as the swift Ships* ; if upon the Earth, they are *swifter than a Post* : Or if we look into the Air, the *Eagle that hasteth to her Prey*, flies not so swift as the wings of Time carry us, Job ix. beginning.

Now tho' a Life of *Fourscore Years* should be thus described by those things which are but of a *few days*, it may be but a *few minutes* continuance, yet there is no Impropriety or Unjustness in the Representation ; because that *Everlasting Duration* which the Scriptures all along have a respect to, will make the Life even of a *Methuselah* to seem but a moment ; and when compared with Eternity, a Thousand Years are no more than a Point of Time : But when we consider how many Ages now go to make up such a Summ as a Thousand Years, and yet how few that live to what we call a full Age ; such Comparisons as these, cannot but appear with a very moving Propriety.

2. Our *Life* is called a *Vapour*, to signify the *Uncertainty* of it : For as such a Meteor never continues long, so it is always
very

very *uncertain*; one moment spreading to a considerable magnitude, and the next dwindling away, so as to be scarce visible; Now it shines with a brightness that shall draw the attention of all about it, and in the twinkling of an Eye disappears, and is suddenly put out. Just such an Uncertain thing is Life, so continually in danger, and so quickly Extinguished. If I may speak in borrowed Language: "When we consider
 " this fearful and wonderful Frame of a Humane Body, this
 " infinitely complicated Engine; in which to the due performance of the several Functions and Offices of Life so many
 " ny Strings, and Springs, so many Receptacles and Channels
 " are necessary, and all in their right Frame and Order; and
 " in which, besides the infinite Imperceptable and Secret
 " ways of Mortality, there are so many Sluices and Flood-gates to let Death in, and Life out; we must say that it is
 " next to a Miracle, tho' we take but little notice of it, that
 " every one of us did not Die, every day since we were Born,
 " Tillotson.

So many are the *Distempers*, and so many the *Casualties* with which the *Bills of Mortality* are filled every *Week*; some dying in the Bloom, and others in the Midst of their Days; some wearing away by slow degrees, and others on a sudden expiring; some in the midst of Business, and a full Employment, others in the midst of Honours, and in the Highest Stations; that upon the whole we find, in all Ages and in all Conditions, Mens Lives are at the same Uncertainties; Nay, sometimes Life is like a Vapour in this, that it makes the brightest Blaze, and draws the greatest Observation, when upon the Point of Expiring.

3. Our Life is compared to a *Vapour*, to show the *Irrecoverableness* of it when it is once gone: *it vanisheth away*. Thus Death is described by the *Psalmist*, *as a going hence and being seen no more*, *Psal. xxxix*. And in this sense it is said in the Book of *Job*, *that Man lieth down, and riseth not 'till the Heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep*, *Job xiv. 12*. What I Design by this, is to put us upon a suitable Attention to a Truth Universally acknowledg'd, but laid to Heart, as it ought to be, by very few. It is utterly impossible we should return to any of the Affairs and Enjoyments of this World, or into a second State of Tryal and Probation for a future World, when once Death hath passed upon us. Our Condition then is for ever determin'd, and our Place of Abode for ever fix'd; so that *in the Place where the Tree falleth, there it shall be*, *Eccles. xi. 3*.

Hence it is that the Wise Man prefers the Living to the Dead, because *the Living know that they shall die*. Those that

have once miscarried in Dying, can never amend, or correct the Mistake; but those that are still Alive, have the Priviledge of looking to their Approaching Dissolution, and of preparing for it, as what is yet to come.

Before I leave this Head, it may not be improper to Observe, that our Text does not say the Soul is a Vapour that vanisheth away, but the Life is so. The Soul 'tis true goes forth with the Breath, but it does not lose either its Being, or Activity, by its separation from the Body: and those, who would argue any thing from such Passages as this, to the debasing of Humane Nature, and putting it upon a Level with that of Brutes, do show indeed what they could wish might be, not what in Reason appears to be, the Sense and Import thereof. There is one Place in the Ecclesiastes, that has been strangely perverted by such; which I would take this Opportunity to set in its true Light; and that is in the iii Chap. 19, 20, 21 verses; *For that which befallerh the Sons of Men, befallerh Beasts, even one thing befallerh them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other, yea they have all one breath; so that a Man hath no pre eminence above a Beast, for all is Vanity.*

To understand which, the Intent of Solomon throughout the whole Book ought to be kept in view; and that is to consider the several States of Life, and the Notions of Men, that could make any pretensions to a satisfying Felicity. And it is very evident that here he is only Personating a Voluptuous Arguing Infidel; or it may be representing his own way of Talking, when carried away by an Atheistical Profane Spirit. I read it therefore as an account of what those Men think, or if they could, would think, who chuse to live like Brutes, rather than as Reasonable, Immortal Creatures. Thus he represents 'em as going on: Some tell us indeed of the Soul of Man surviving the Body, while that of Beasts perishes, *but who knowerh the Spirit of a Man that goes upward, and the Spirit of a Beast that goes downward?* who ever saw either of these ascending, or descending, or who can pretend to give such a distinct Account of them? Thus deriding the Thoughts of their Immortality, they resolve all into this; that *nothing is better than for a Man to rejoyce in his own works here, as his Portion and Happiness:* But that this Oracle of Wisdom only brings in these things to Condemn them, is evident from that most plain and express sense of the Matter, which he gives us as his own afterwards; xii Chap. 7. ver. *Then shall the dust return to the Earth as it was; and the Spirit shall return to God who gave it.* So that while Men talk at this rate, they only prove themselves of the number of those whom Solomon there Describes; not of those who believe and Understand things as he did.

But

But it is fit we should turn away from such as are thus Careless and Unreflecting, to support and assist those that are apt with too much Melancholy and Uneasiness to Muse on their present Frailty, and Mortality; which is what we have propos'd under the next Head.

II. To Consider those things that may *Reconcile us to this account of Life*. And it is absolutely necessary in order hereto, that we lay together, and pursue a while, some such Thoughts as these.

The Great Author of Nature, whose Wisdom and Goodness are Infinite, having made Man an Intelligent Rational Creature, must have design'd and intended him for some End suitable to such a Being, and such Capacities. The utmost of what Men enjoy and arrive at here, falls vastly short of such an End; and the whole World is no more able to Satisfie, than it is to Redeem a Soul: But look we steadfastly into the Heavens, Survey the Glories, and consider the Employments of those that are Immortalized there; and then look back upon the present Life, as it refers and leads to that Blissful Eternity; and we are no more distress'd to think of the Shortness, the Uncertainty and the Irrecoverableness of it.

This will reconcile us to the Thoughts of *appearing here but for a little time*; since we see a better and unspeakably more desirable State in the Future, than any Condition can be in the Present World: So numerous and so grievous are the Calamities of this Life, that instead of bewailing the *shortness*, many have *complained* of the *length* of it; and have sought for *Death, even as for a hid Treasure*: All which Miseries are intirely and for ever removed from the Soul that gets to Heaven; and innumerable Joys and Pleasures are its Portion in their stead.

And tho' Life be very short, yet it is *long enough* for this *Great and Main Work*, our *Preparation for Heaven*. We are indeed fallen from our Creator, and therefore we suffer a while under the necessary Consequences of that shameful Apostacy; but as God has set on foot a Design of Recovering us out of this State of Sin and Misery; and has sent his Son to publish his Grace and Good-will to Sinners; and by his Death to make Satisfaction for the Sins of all those who sincerely believe in him, Repenting and turning unto God thro' him: So as soon as we are brought to a Compliance with these Terms, and made prevalingly desirous of God's Favour, and possess'd with all those Great and Good thoughts of him, which may fit us for an Everlasting Fruition, our Work is done: and nothing more remains, if we should abide never so long here; but that we *continue* in his Love, *holding fast* the Profession

Profession of our *Faith*, being *stedfast* in the Performance of our *Duty*, and enlarging our Thoughts and Desires still more and more according to the Means and Helps we have for that purpose. And the shorter Life is, when it comes to be thus employ'd, the sooner do we receive the *End of our Faith*, even the *Salvation of our Souls*, 1 Pet. i. 9.

I am sensible that Life is much too short to accomplish all the designs of the Men of Learning, or of Politicks, or of Business; but if you will believe One who was acknowledg'd to be a Person of the greatest Learning, and who had been employ'd in the greatest Concerns, those of Courts and Kingdoms; He speaks both of his Severe Studies, and of his several Embassies, as a Bussie Idleness; and at last cried out, *Ah vitam perdididi operose nihil agendo. I have lost my Life in a Laborious doing of nothing.* Upon which it is very just to Conclude, that our main Work and Business is not to manage the Affairs, or to search after the Wisdom of this World, but to get acquainted with, and prepare for Another; and that a very short Life duly improved, would be long enough to do.

But further, when we consider the *Uncertainty* of Life, the Prospect of an *Eternal State* will in This also Relieve and quiet our Thoughts. We know not but we shall Die before to Morrow; but we know that if we are *ready*, a Surprizing Death will be only a Surprizing Happiness; and there is nothing more likely to make, or keep us *ready*, than a constant Expectation of our Departure.

Universal Experience shews us, that nothing less would be a restraint upon the Wicked, or a prevailing Excitement to Watchfulness, and Diligence in the Righteous themselves. Let but the *Unfaithful Servant* once say in his Heart that the *Lord delays his Coming*; and all his Appetites, both the Angry and the Voluptuous, as Doctor Bates somewhere observes, are immediately let loose; He begins to smite his Fellow Servants, and to Eat and Drink with the Drunken; yea, the Good Man too would be apt to grow very remiss and negligent, were it not for such a Text as that; *Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth Come*, Matth. xxiv. 42.

The keeping us at Uncertainties, and Hiding from us the particular Time of our Death, may be consider'd as Serviceable to very great and wise Purposes, even at Present; but much more does it satisfy and calm the Mind to consider this, with respect to Eternity.

See Sercock's Practical Discourse Concerning Death.
. 227. &c.

It is, I confess, very Trying to see a *useful Life snatch'd away on a sudden*; and with It a great many Generous Designs falling to the Ground. If ever we might wish or hope for a
Certain

Certain Continuance of any Life, it would be such an One; but even in this Case we may rest satisfied that the Dying Party does not lose the Reward of what he wisely and piously *design'd*, no more than of what he has already *effected*; many times Such are taken away from the Evil to come. And for others who are Sufferers by such Strokes, they frequently prove a seasonable Refuke to our Sins, a means of cutting off those Prospects and Expectations, that might fix our Hearts on the Creature, instead of God, and so very much promote our Piety and Heavenly mindedness. And after all, we are sure, that a future State will Explain the darkest Passages to our full Satisfaction. And that however uncertain and *accidental* these things may seem to us Here, yet Hereafter we shall see that all has been done according to the *Wiseest Counsels*, and by the most *Unerring Rules*.

I need not add much to quiet us under the Thoughts of the *Irrecoverableness* of Life; because what is said of this, we find Persons generally more satisfied with. When we consider the Death of our Friends and Relations, we quickly fall in with that of *David*, ii Sam. xii. 23. *Now he is dead wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.* And when we consider it as our Own Case, it is enough to think, that we have fair and frequent Warnings before hand; which if we hearken to, we may obtain a *better Life*, in a *better World*, though we cannot return again to *this*. So that, if we are Irrecoverably Miserable, we must take it to our selves, since we would not be perswaded of our Danger, nor brought to our Duty: And if we are Unalterably Blessed, we shall have no reason to lament our being taken from this Earth, tho' never more to return to it.

That it may be thus with us, let us now seriously attend to
III. The *Improvement* which we ought to make of these Things.

1. From hence we may Learn how to *Manage*, and to *behave our selves with reference to the Affairs and Enjoyments of this Life*. Since our Life is but as a *Vapour that appeareth for a little time*, the Apostle argues that we should not *presume upon Futurity*, nor *act as those that Do so*. *Go to now, ye that say to day or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the Morrow, &c.*

It is strange that Men should be more concerned to lay in for future Years, than for a future Eternity; when it is so seldom that they live to see those Years, and so certain that they must enter into Eternity. Is not He very justly Condemn'd for his *Folly*, who promised himself a Long time to come,

come, when he had not a Day to live? In strict speaking it can be call'd nothing less than *Distraction* for Persons to follow such an Example, when it proves such an instance of Ruine and Disappointment. I would not be understood as arguing against a Prudent Concern for the Time yet before us; but against all *boasting and presumptuous Confidence* of what we *will do*, or what we *shall enjoy* hereafter. And if it was possible to Correct so Bold and Projecting a Temper, one would think the foregoing Considerations of the shortness, and uncertainty, and irrecoverableness of Life would do it.

So Those, who are promising themselves a variety of future Pleasures, and Indulging a vain Romantick Imagination in all its delusive prospects, should methinks lay aside such Gay and Flattering Conceits, and become so Wise as to transfer all their high Expectations of a Real Happiness to Another World.

I wonder the Thoughts of sudden Death, and the Consequent Misery of them that *forget God*, does not spoil the Sinful Mirth and Jollity of the Volupuary; and Arrest the Busy Worldling in his Criminal pursuits of Wealth and Riches: and surely they could not stifle or dismiss such thoughts as they Do, if ever they apply'd 'em to their Own Case: But whilst they allow that Life is a *Vapour*; that many who are in Health, will in a few Days or Months, be laid in their Graves; yet they never reckon *Themselves* amongst the Number. Should a Voice from Heaven tell such an one by Name, *this Night thy Soul shall be required of Thee*; how would it startle his Mind, and turn the whole Current of his Thoughts and Designs?

But will such say, This is the way to lose all our Delight and Pleasure, and make us neglect our necessary Concerns, to be Always under such apprehensions of the Nearness and Approach of Death: To which I would Answer. And fit it is certainly, that both your Sinful Pleasures, and your Sinful Cares should be abandon'd, by *the daily considering of your latter end*: which being done, this would never rob you of any Licens'd Pleasure, or hinder you in any Lawful Business, only it would make you *wise* in both. To illustrate this by a plain Similitude; you may be liable every Night to be surpriz'd by Thieves and Robbers; this may make you Careful in the Evening to Lock and Bar your Doors and Windows, but it does not prevent your going to Bed, or break your Repose: So may we daily be in Expectation of Death, and provide against it, but it needs not to break in upon, either the usual Business, or Refreshments of the Day.

In short, whether we are mourning for the Want, or rejoycing in the Use, or aiming at the Purchase, and procuring of any Temporal Blessing, we should keep in mind that of the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. vi. *They that weep should be as though they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not: and they that buy, as though they possess'd not: and they that use this World as not abusing it; for the Fashion of this World passeth away.*

2. Let us from hence be Instructed to set a higher value upon, and be more Careful about, the Welfare of our Immortal never dying Souls. Let us no longer set our Affections upon that which is vain and fleeting; nor prize, as we have done, the Enjoyments of a Life that is no better than a Vapour; but let us mind more those things which tend to raise an Ennoble our Spirits, and to Exalt us to the Life of Angels, and the Immediate Presence of God. It is said of *Pythagoras*, that he gave himself up for some time to those Exercises that might add Strength and Agility to his Body, and Enable him to Excel in the *Olympick Games*; till he heard *Pherecydes* talking of the Excellency and Immortality of the Soul; and then he made it his Business to advance in Knowledge and Vertue. How will such Instances as This Reproach and Condemn us, if notwithstanding all the Great Things that, we hear and read, our Souls are made For, and Capable of, we still debase their Noble Faculties, only to pursue the Things of Sense, and of this uncertain Life? And shall that Invaluable Being; that precious never dying Spirit be made away with for the sake of Trifles? and all its best Thoughts and Affections fix'd upon that which is not, and from which in a Moment it may be snatch'd away?

Shall it still be said of any that they Act so like Children, or that from Children, they are become Brutes instead of Men? you may show indeed the Man in this, that the Rational Powers do exert themselves with greater vigour; and whilst you seem to Act Rationally, you may with some Reason, Argue and plead for what you do; but are not your Principles and your Ends still the same, or worse than what they were in your Minority? and is it not Sense and this Life that you are still Catering for?

Men take it for Granted, that such and such Appetites are to be Gratified, and that they cannot be Happy except it be so; when the only way to the Happiness they propose, would be to Unravel all their Actions to their very First Motives, and Principles, and to change and alter These. And Oh! that I could but prevail with the Sensualist to take such a Course as this, and I durst answer for it, that his Schemes both of Thinking and Acting would be changed Infinitely for the better.

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But

But who is sufficient to perswade such? they have heard over and over the most affecting things, even till they are Steel'd and Hardned with them, till they can sit and Sleep under 'em, or go away and make a Jest of them. Tell 'em they know not what shall be on the Morrow, their Lives are a *Vapour*, &c. the Judge is at the Door, and their Damnation is at hand; they have heard all this so Often, and have thought of it so Little, that it is become no more than a Sound, that reaches only the Ear, and is lost, as soon as heard. Beseech 'em by all that's Solemn and Sacred, by all that's Great, and Important, to take Gare of their Souls; tell 'em with a *Dead Corps*, or the *Ensigns* of it before their Eyes, that in a *little while* it will be So with them; yet you might as well speak to the Dead themselves, as to such. But thine Almighty Voice, Blessed God! can raise the Dead; do thou therefore speak the Word, and those that are Dead in Trespases and Sins, shall immediately Live!

And now since the Gospel Informs us that Christ Jesus alone *has the words of Eternal Life*; this should Engage us to give up our selves to Him, as the only way to be Saved from Sin and Death; and so to believe in him, and follow him here, that we may be *with him where he is*, and may *behold his Glory*, Joh. xvii. 24. Let us then Enter our Names, and Lift our selves under his Banners; submit to his Discipline and Appointments, constantly Serving and faithfully Adhering to him, as not doubting but he will be the *Author of Eternal Salvation to All them that obey him*.

Let us never forget the Import of that Great Name, *A CHRISTIAN*; but according to the *Apostle's* Admonition, *Let every one that names the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity*: and in Imitation of his Brave Spirit and Example, *forgetting those things which are behind, let us reach forth unto those things which are before, pressing toward the Mark for the Prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus*, Phil. iii. 13.

3. Let the foregoing Considerations put us always upon the *best Improvement of our present moments*. Time is justly esteem'd more Valuable and Precious than Gold or Jewels, or the greatest Treasure, because it is not to be Regain'd when once gone from us. Other things if lost, may be found, or purchased again, and may be had with advantage; but our Time, when once past, can never be Liv'd over again; nor can we Purchase one Expired Day, if we would give ten thousand Worlds. Your greatest Offers, and most passionate Intreaties when you Come to Die, will not prevail for One of those Hours that now it may be you think a Burden, or are trifling away.

I wish

I wish those that as *Job* speaks, *take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ; that spend their Days in wealth, or in mirth, and in a moment go down to the Grave*, *Job* xxi. 12, 13. would for this once be perswaded to a Serious consideration of what has been said. It is a Noble Passage of *Sir Francis Walsingham*, when some of the Courtiers came to him, to divert him, being as they apprehended in a Melancholy Fit, He cast a damp upon all their *Gayety*, by thus Explaining his Thoughtfulness to 'em. "Ah! my Friends, "while we *Laugh* all things are *Serious* round about us; God "is *Serious*, who Exercises such Patience towards us; *Christ* "is *Serious*, who shed his Blood for us; the *Holy Ghost* is *Serious*, who striveth against the obstinacy of our Hearts; "the *Holy Scriptures* bring to our Ears the most *Serious* and "Important things in the whole World; the *Holy Sacraments* "represent the most *Serious* and awful Matters; the whole "Creation is *Serious* in serving God, and us; All that are in "Heaven, and in Hell are *Serious*; How then can a Man that "has *one Foot in the Grave*, *jest and Laugh*? I am sure this ought to be Consider'd by those who spend their Whole Time in a vain and Irreligious Merriment: The Healthiest in the World, may for any thing they know, be as Near the Grave, and so may as properly be said to have *one foot in it*, as this Person was.

Since you know not what may be on the Morrow, don't lose this Evening; Go Home, set your selves in a Thinking Posture; and whilst you are *Musing*, it may be your Hearts may *burn*, and be *inflam'd* with some such *Ardent Request*, as that of *David*, *Lord! make me to know mine End, and the Measure of my Days what it is, that I may know how frail I am*, *Pf. xxxix. 4.*

Let such Thoughts as these *abide* with us also; and let 'em Engage us to *Live Daily*, as those that *Die daily*; so as that with every Setting Sun we may be able to say, *Whether to morrows Sun rise, or not, we have lived to Day.* And so may we close our Eyes every Evening in the Comfortable hope of opening them either with the Mornings Light, or in Eternal Day.

I shall now add something concerning the Mournful Subject that has occasion'd this Discourse, and so Conclude.

THE Publick News-Papers have already told you that Dr. *UPTON*, an *Eminent Physician* in this City is *Dead*; and I beg leave to Publish it, that he was an *Eminent Christian* too: A truly Good, as well as a Great Man; whose *Memory* as it is *blessed*, so it ought to be *preserv'd*.

I cannot, I confess, be of the Number of those who are so very Judicious as to drop all Characters of the Deceas'd; nor yet would I give *Flattering Titles to any*; for in so doing, I know my Maker would soon take me away: But I have sometimes found as to my Self, and have frequently observ'd it as to others, that the Recommending any part of Religion by an Example, has been of very great Service; and I would not lose One Witness to Christianity, let the Enemies of it say or think what they will on such Occasions.

No body can be so weak as to suppose, whilst we are speaking of what was Excellent, and commendable in Any, that they had not their Frailties and Imperfections; for many such there will be when we have done our best; but surely That will never stand for a Reason why we should either not speak of, or not Endeavour to Imitate their Graces.

For my own part I am not yet sensible of any Mistake, in thinking that the *most Private Life and Character* may be of Use as well as those of *Statesmen, and Princes*; nay the former must suit the Circumstances of a greater part of the World than the latter does; there are unspeakably More in a Low than in a High Condition. And if this should put any upon expecting the like to be said of them, or Theirs, when they have done nothing to deserve it, I see no Difficulty in Declining it; nor should I ever trouble my self with what the Consequence of so doing, might be.

I hope you will pardon this Digression; for as such I desire it may be look'd upon, since it might have been spared at present.

As to the Extraction of our Departed Friend, (for a Friend I am sure I have abundant Reason to call him) he descended from a very Ancient and Worthy Family: and what he chiefly Gloried in, from such as truly Fear'd God, and did Great Things for him in their Day. He went thro' all that is usual in the Schools and Colleges, to fit him for his Design'd Employment in the World; and all that knew him, must allow, that both his Genius and Acquirements were Extraordinary.

I might follow him in the several Scenes of his Life, to his last Settlement in the Place where he died; and from several Passages out of his own Mouth, as well as what I have heard from his nearest Relative; a many very Instructive Things might be Set to View, but I rather chuse to insist upon what I have observ'd my self in that Intimate, tho' alas, too Short Acquaintance I have had with him.

And I would particularly Consider his *Life and Example*, as it may Enforce what I have been Explaining, and Pressing in the foregoing Discourse.

He

He was not one of those that Promis'd himself, or that acted upon a vain Presumption of Long Life, He had frequent Warnings of the Contrary, by Bodily Indispositions; and tho' He was of a very Cheerful and Sprightly Temper when free from Pains and Disorders, yet would He never put far from Him a Dying Day. He knew how to maintain a Sense of his Mortality without Uneasiness, and in the midst of Business.

He was far from setting his Heart on any Gains or Grandeur in this World; as his great Generosity in the whole Course of his Practice of Physick does abundantly prove. And as the Holy Ghost has seen fit to Record in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, the little Eulogies of those who wept over the dead Body of *Dorcas*, speaking of the Coats that she had made for 'em, and the Kindness she shew'd 'em whilst Alive; so may we very well take notice in the present Case of those who are lamenting the Loss of Dr. *UPTON*, and speaking to one another of the Care that he took to Save their Lives, and Heal their Diseases; and who have this to add to all, that He did it *freely* too.

How many Persons have I my self heard Crying, and saying, *He would not take any thing of Me, and yet as ready to Help me, as if I had given him never so much.* He had as great Opportunity for getting a Large Estate, as many of those who have been most talk'd of on that account; and perhaps none in his Station more Fully Employ'd: But he all along shew'd that he took more pleasure in doing Good to Others, than Enriching himself. He has indeed taken Care to make a very handsome Provision for his Family, and a Double Blessing I doubt not will accompany what he has left; but I may very safely say it would have amounted to several Thousands more, if he had been of the Temper of some others.

I mention this to let you see upon how much nobler a Principle He acted than that of the Generality, *to get all they can*; and how very Remote his Spirit and Behaviour was, from that which our *Text* is brought to Reprove; and it will further appear to have been the Reverse, if we Consider the Serious Regards that he always had to the *Will* and *Providence* of God.

His Piety was very Inward, and free from all Affectation, but yet very Real, and fruitful, and full of Good Works.

He was always possess'd with Awful and Honourable Thoughts of God, and could not hear his Name Blasphem'd without great Uneasiness, and Concern. He was firmly Establish'd in the Belief of *Revealed Religion*, and that not without Considering, and being well acquainted with, the most prevailing

prevailing Cavils of Infidelity. He knew what Strefs to lay in this Matter upon the Inward Testimony of the Spirit; and could look to the Vital Renewing Influences thereof upon his own Soul: It was in his account, *a faithful Saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to Save Sinners.* These Heads, and many more some time ago I have had occasion to talk with him upon, when Discourfing on those words, *Rom. i. 16. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth.*

He lov'd the Publick Worship of God, and would always Contrive the Visiting his Patients, if possible, so as to give his Attendance Once at least every *Lords-Day*. And when he was Absent, He was Employ'd either in Works of Necessity, or Mercy. Asto the way in which he chose to Worship God, it was with the *Moderate Dissenters*; for so I think I may call this Assembly: and such a one I am sure he was: Very Charitable in his Sentiments, Loving and Valuing true Goodness wherever he saw it. He had the highest Esteem for your late *Pastor*, the Admirable Mr. *Sylvester*, whom he us'd to call his *Spiritual Father*; and he continued a Kind and Faithful Friend to him, notwithstanding his Discouragements from others. He did not forsake your Assembly at the Death of that *Valued Man*, as too many in other Places have done upon such a Remove; But he still appear'd as a very great Encourager, and a Support to us ever since. He has always maintain'd his Resolutions of standing by us; and even at a time of the most violent Assaults upon us, when our Place of Worship was Demolish'd, and we every where Insulted, He was not asham'd of Us, or our Cause. He well knew how to Interpret, and what Use to make of the Scandalous Falshoods that have been Publish'd to Exasperate such as were Ignorant of us, and to set them against us. He look'd upon our *Interest*, in the midst of all the Contempt that was cast upon it, as what did not *deserve* to have been so Treated.

The greatest Thing indeed he us'd to say for the *Dissenters* was, that he lov'd their Serious and Affectionate way both of Praying, and Preaching; and that he always found himself the better for it. As Prince *Henry* once said upon hearing the *Puritans* of those Times talk'd against: *That he knew not what they call'd Puritan Preaching, but he lov'd that Preaching best, that went nearest his Heart.* So would the Doctor in some such manner as that, often Plead for us. I mention these Things, in hope that they will not be look'd upon as Eclipsing Him, but rather as Reflecting an Honour upon us.

To proceed, he was Careful to keep up Religion in his Family, as well as in Publick; and I wish those who make Business a Pretext for the Neglect of Family-Prayer, would think of the constant Hurries of such a Life as His; and withal Remember that he did not on the account of these, Live in the Omission either of his Private or Secret Devotion. He was very Serious in his Preparations for a Sacrament; and tho' he had not so much Leisure as I have heard him sometimes wish for; yet still did he always maintain a Sense of the Solemnity and Importance of such an Institution.

He was a Hearty Friend to the Ministers of all Denominations, and upon all Occasions ready to Help either them or their Families when sent for, without Fee or Reward,

He was a Person of a truly Publick Spirit, heartily Concern'd for the Welfare of his Country, Studious of those things that might make for Peace; and wisely sensible of the Dangerous Consequences of our Heats and Divisions.

He had a Tender Love for his Relatives, behav'd himself Wisely in his own House, and lov'd to be in it as much as he could. And tho' his frequent Pains, and constant Fatigues, might sometimes shorten and ruffle his Temper, yet there was never any abiding Disgusts, or any abatement of his hearty Affection. As the Master of a Family he was Provident, and Rul'd well; as a Husband he was Kind and Engaging; as a Father he was truly Solicitous about the Good of his Children, both in this, and a better World. He has indeed out of many, but Two that Survive him, a Son, and a Daughter; the one he has lately settled with a Merchant of good Repute in this City; and the other he has Married to a Person very suitable, and desirable to the Family; and one who I hope was sent in Mercy against such a Time as this.

He was Liberal, and Bountiful to those that were in Want; and his Charitable Contributions both Yearly, and Occasional, were very Considerable; He always desired that, instead of making a Show at his Funeral, by Inviting the Rich, he might have the Poor call'd in, and Reliev'd; which Desire has been fulfill'd.

He had a true Relish of Friendship, a good Taste in Conversation, and was himself, in the general, as Entertaining and as Profitable as any. In his most pleasant Hours I never found him unfit to turn to a Serious Subject; nor did his Seriousness in the least spoil or lessen his good Temper. If there were any whose Manner he could not fall in with, he had the Wisdom not to attempt it. He was open, free and easie; and was as far from Stiffness and Affectation in his common Behaviour, as in his Religion. He had no forbidding Jealousies, or Fears of wanting a due Respect from those he Convers'd with; but took a way rather to Invite a Familiarity, than to keep his Friends at a distance from him. This part of so lovely a Character, makes me forget my self. I must Conclude it, and that I shall do, with what adds a Lustre to all.

To He was a Man of great Humility, very sensible of his Frailties, and of a Contrite Spirit, with respect to God: How Devout and Affectionate have I seen him at a Sacramental Table! He was not asham'd to speak of his former Difficulties and Troubles; He lov'd

lov'd to Recount the Kindnesses of Providence towards Him, and His. And yet he never would Boast of his Successes; nor did He Rise at all in the Conceit of his Merit thereupon. He was far from Censuring, or running down any in the way of his Profession, to Advance himself. He would go to the Meanest in their Afflictions, as well as to the Rich and Great. He was strangely averse to the making a Show in the Eyes of the World; and it was his Constant Desire to be Carried as Modestly out of it, as he had Lived in it. His Body was accordingly Interr'd as privately as might be in the *Parish* where he Dwelt; and where others of his Relations had before taken up their Rest. Thus was he gather'd unto his Fathers, in the Fifty fourth Year of his Age.

The Manner of his Death I told you at the beginning of this Discourse was sudden, being apparently Well at his going to Bed, about Eleven a Clock, and struck with Death before Two in the Morning; tho' he did not actually Expire till about Nine. Some Things have been already hinted, that may quiet our Minds under such a Surprising Stroke, and I must not now stay to Enlarge.

Let the Impressions that have now been made, Abide with us; and if you can carry away no more, yet be sure to Remember, and often call to mind this Text: *Ye know not what shall be on the Morrow; For what is your Life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.*

Such an Example, and such a Decease must surely be very Instructive to us. He Died in the midst of very Gainful and Reputable Business; He died in the midst of many Distinguishing and Comfortable Enjoyments, and many Fair Prospects; He Died generally Desired, and Belov'd, as we see by his being so Universally Lamented: And he Died so suddenly, that he had but just time, after his first Seizure, to Bless his Family, before he lost his Speech, and his Senses. He that hath Ears to Hear, let him Hear the Voice of such a Providence, which so loudly calls to us in the Language of our Blessed Saviour, *Be ye also Ready.* And if He, who, while Living has been Instrumental to Save so many of our Lives, may but by his Death promote the Salvation of our Souls; this will turn our present Sorrow and Distress, into after Thankfulness, and Praise.

May this be the Comfortable Consequence of so Sad a Day to his Mourning Relatives! that Almighty God may be instead of a Husband to the Widow, and instead of a Father to the Fatherless. And may it be to all of us a Means of Disgracing this Visible, and Realizing an Invisible World; that when it shall be said of one and another of us, as in a little Time it will be, *They are Dead*; it may also be said, as we have abundant Reason to add in the present Case, *They are Happy.*

Which God of his Infinite Mercy grant, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was dead, but is alive, and lives for evermore; to whom be all Glory, Power and Obedience, World without End, Amen.

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